which they may apply for permanent skilled migration . When applying for permanent skilled migration, they will need to demonstrate a higher level of English proficiency than that required earlier.

(b) No.

(c) and (d) Do not arise,

Plight of Indian workers abroad

22. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN : Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that thousands of Indian and other immigrant workers had protested against their employers for low wages, forced labour and torture by their employers;

(b) whether many of them were arrested and put on wrongful confinement and were not provided any-legal aid;

(c) whether our embassy in Dubai talked to the concerned authorities about the plight of Indian workers; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir. About 4300 workers of Pauling Middle East Company on 28.10.07 and about 35000 workers of Arabtec Construction Company in UAE had gone on strike from 1.11.07 demanding increase in salary etc.

(b) to (d) In case of M/s Pauling Middle East Company out of 4300 workers detained by police authorities 4141 workers have been released and rejoined work. There were about 90 Indians detained for investigation for violence out of which 87 were sent back to India. 3 Indians are still under detention and are awaiting the final decision of UAE authorities. Consulate officials are in touch with UAE authorities for their release and return to India. In the case of M/s Arabtec Construction Company, most of the workers resumed work after the company announced an increase in salary on 10.11.07. Around 500 workers from various nationalities who tried to stop others from going to work were arrested. The Consulate officials are providing all possible assistance to these workers.

Indians working in Dubai

23. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of Indians working in Dubai were arrested by the Dubai Authorities;

(b) whether Government had approached the Dubai authorities in this regard;

(c) the stand taken by Government in this regard;

(d) the response of the Dubai authorities; and

(e) the details of the decisions taken by the Dubai authorities regarding the arrested Indians?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir. Initially, around 4300 workers of M/s Pauling Middle East Company, Dubai, who had gone on protest against the company demanding higher salary etc., of whom a large number were